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16 FEB 1954

TO : Chief, WH

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

FROM : Chief of Station, [ ]

INFO LINCOLN

SUBJECT: GENERAL— Operational - KUGOWN  
SPECIFIC— Anti-Guatemalan Activities

Reference: FM 138-53

1. Attachments 1 through 9 are copies of articles published by the Liga Anti-Comunista de Costa Rica attacking the Guatemalan Government. The themes which have been utilized are those indicating Communist power in Guatemala and which tend to prove the link between the Central American Communists, especially those in Guatemala, and the Soviet Union.
2. Attachments 10 through 27 are representative articles of local origin concerning whether or not Costa Rica should attend the Caracas Conference. Attachment 13, a column by Mario GARCIA Arocha, points out, somewhat unrealistically, some of the theoretical problems which may have to be solved at Caracas concerning any proposed resolutions to be taken to combat Communist infiltration. His article reflects, in part, the preoccupation in local intellectual (i.e. egghead) sectors that the growth of dictatorships in Latin America is a worse threat than the growth of Communism. Attachment 15, by Victor VARGAS Quesada another of the Liberal eggheads, also reflects the same worry about dictatorships, although he espouses attendance at the Conference. Attachment 16, a letter written by Gonzalo SIERRA Cantillo, Secretary General of the Communist-front Confederacion General of Trabajadores Costaricenses, which appeared in La Nacion on 16 January urges President FIGUERES not to attend the Caracas Conference. SIERRA's letter states that the Conference is only a method of hiding U.S. aggression against Guatemala and urges that if Costa Rica should attend, that it refuse to vote in favor of any motions against Guatemala. La Nacion published the letter under the headline "Los Camaradas Piden Al Pdte. Figueres No Asistir a Caracas", which clearly labelled the letter as being Communist inspired. Attachment 17, which appeared in the Figueres-controlled La Republica, on 16 January plays the story as a

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straight news item, without labelling it as Communist. [ ] understands that Figueres takes no active part in running La Republica, which has consistently played up stories from any source opposing attendance at Caracas. Attachment 18 is an editorial from La Republica, urging non-attendance. Attachment 19, a letter by Isoberto MONTENEGRO published in the Diario de Costa Rica, poses, but does not answer the question, whether that democratic countries like Costa Rica should attend the Conference to protest against the dictatorships, or should refrain from attending in protest. Again, the Communist problem is relegated to second place in view of the problem of the Latin dictators. Attachments 20 and 21 are local news stories of the resolution taken by ORIT against the Caracas Conference. In connection with this, the writer had occasion to discuss the resolution with various U.S. and Latin American delegates and arrived at the conclusion that the strong influence of exiles in ORIT had considerable to do with that organization's opposition to the Conference. The American delegates expressed disgust with the entire matter, but felt that they had to go along with the crowd for the sake of unity. Attachment 22 is a plea for suspension of the Caracas Conference by a number of intellectuals, including Gonzalo FACIO, President of the National Assembly, again in protest against the Venezuelan Junta. Attachment 24 is a long statement to the press by FACIO reiterating his point of view on non-attendance, in which he at least admits that the Communist problem is important, but suggests a meeting of Foreign Ministers to handle it. Attachment 25, the La Republica column entitled "Brujulia Mundial" for 5 February, concerns the Communist Problem. It urges the U.S. to make available its evidence of Communist infiltration to all Latin governments before the Caracas Conference so that it may be studied and plans made to counteract it. The column hints that the U.S. is getting over-excited on this point, and that its attitude is not based on facts but rather on a Communist neurosis. Attachment 26 is another of the Brujulia Mundial columns which covers fairly objectively the two sides of the argument over Costa Rican attendance at Caracas. Attachment 27, a letter by Dardo REGULES published in La Prensa Libre of 6 February, also covers both sides of the argument. Attachment 28 is an attack on the Venezuelan Government and the Caracas Conference, allegedly in the name of the ORIT, but obviously utilizing material supplied by Accion Democratica elements in Costa Rica. Attachment 29, is a short editorial from La Nacion of 21 January attacking the Guatemalan Communists for objecting to being called Communists by Senator Wiley.

3. Beginning on 23 January the press services began to carry stories alleging a plot against the Guatemalan Government and denials of the same. On 28 January INS carried a story of a plot against the Guatemalan Government which had originated in

the Communist La Tribuna Popular in Mexico City. This story was carried by all the local papers. On the same date there appeared in La Republica a long article reprinted from CEUAGE indicating that civil war in Guatemala is imminent. (Attachment 30). The accusations against SOMOZA and the United States which were made by the office of President Arbenz on 29 January were carried in the local press on the morning of 30 January without comment, although they were given prominent display in all papers. The matter continued to receive lengthy treatment in the press on 31 January (Sunday) without editorial comment on the press service releases. U.S. and Nicaraguan denials of complicity were given adequate attention, as were accusations of atrocities committed by the Guatemalan Government. (Attachment 31). No papers are published on Mondays, so there was no comment on 1 February. On 2 February, the press service stories on the matter again were reprinted without editorial comment, but with headlines which were unfavorable to the Guatemalan Government. The only editorial comment on 2 February on the Guatemalan charges was made by Abelardo BONILLA, in La Nacion. BONILLA's characterization of the Guatemalan accusations as "too fantastic to be true" is believed to reflect public reaction to the matter here. (Attachment 32.). There was considerable general interest in the matter when the charges first began to circulate by radio on 29 January and in the press on 30 January. However, when the details of the accusations became known, the customary Costa Rican skepticism went to work, and U.S. countercharges met with general public acceptance. The press service announcement on 2 February, reprinted in all the local papers on 3 February, that two newspapermen had been expelled from Guatemala naturally caused the local papers to scream with rage. Attachments 33, 34 and 35 are typical of the items published in the press as the result of the action against the newspapermen.

4. Attachments 36 and 37 are articles concerning Jorge Isaac DELGADO, the Panamanian Diplomat allegedly involved in the plot against Guatemala. On 3 February La Republica published an article stating that the Panamanian diplomat who had been implicated in the plot was in San Jose (Attachment 36) without mentioning DELGADO's name. On 4 February, La Republica carried a report indicating that Delgado had been dismissed from his post by the Panamanian Government. (Attachment 37).
5. Attachments 38 through 44 are non-attributed articles concerning the alleged plot, and the Communist hold on that country.
6. Attachments 45 and 46 concern the request of the Guatemalan government to the Costa Rican National Assembly for a resolution supporting the Guatemalan position in the alleged plot. Attachment 45 indicates that the President of the National

Assembly at first attempted to pigeon hole the Guatemalan request, but that it was finally necessary to turn it over to the Foreign Relations Committee of the Assembly for study, because of the insistence of the opposition. Attachment 46 is an editorial from La Nacion of 5 February opposing the passage of the resolution of solidarity with Guatemala. The matter was finally brought to a vote on 11 February and the following non-committal resolution was passed: Costa Rica "renews its faith in and adherence to the inter-American principle of respect for the sovereignty of each country, and condemns all foreign intervention in any American country, in accordance with the Bogota Charter and Montevideo Convention". This resolution was prefaced by the statement that Guatemala had not proven its case, for which reason Costa Rica was unable to fully comply with its request. On 11 February Acting Foreign Minister Fernando FOURNIER told Mr. C. Allen Stewart, First Secretary of the American Embassy in San Jose, that the resolution had been worked out carefully to avoid siding with Guatemala, and at the same time not insult that country by refusing to pass it, or merely acknowledging their request. Curiously enough, the opposition deputies who insisted on the introduction of the resolution in the first place, attempted to substitute for the government resolution during the 11 February debate, a resolution which merely would have acknowledged the Guatemalan request.

7. Attachment 47 is the first of a series of three articles which appeared in El Diario de Costa Rica beginning 9 February containing the text of the Guatemalan charges. On 11 February El Diario printed a letter of protest from the Nicaraguan Ambassador denying completely the charges made by the Guatemalan Government.
8. Attachment 48 is an article datelined Washington, which appeared in La Republica on 3 February, concerning Senator Fullbright's speech praising the Costa Rican handling of the United Fruit Company situation in contrast with the same Company's treatment in Guatemala.
9. Attachments 49 through 57 are news stories and articles concerning the Dominican Republic's charges that the Communists are transferring their center of operations from Guatemala to Costa Rica. These charges caused considerable reaction here in San Jose; much more than the accusations made by Guatemala. Of particular interest is attachment 57, an editorial from La Republica of 9 February which states in the penultimate paragraph "A little more than a month ago, a Dominican Diplomat accompanied a certain Costa Rican doctor on a mysterious trip with the following itinerary: Mexico; Miami, La Habana, Ciudad Trujillo, Caracas. The last lap of the trip was made in a clandestine manner, that is, the arrival and departure of the

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plane was not legally recorded". Naturally, this paragraph refers to the trip of Rafael Angel CALDERON Guardia to Caracas. [ ] and ODACID have both previously reported that Government circles in Costa Rica were aware of the trip, probably through a combination of Costa Rican diplomatic reports, and agents of Juan BOSCH and Romulo Betancourt.

10. Attachment 58 consists of an envelope of press service reports on Communism in Guatemala, the Caracas conference, the Guatemalan charges, and the Dominican charges, which appeared in the local press from 7 January through 7 February. It should be noted that while the papers generally publish the news service dispatches as received, they have used their heads and sub-heads do some editorializing. A survey of these heads indicates that Guatemala is often labelled Communistic, a damning phrase in democratic Costa Rica.

[ ]  
Stan R. Labanow

Enclosures: As above - in att. drawer

15 February

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3-Wash  
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